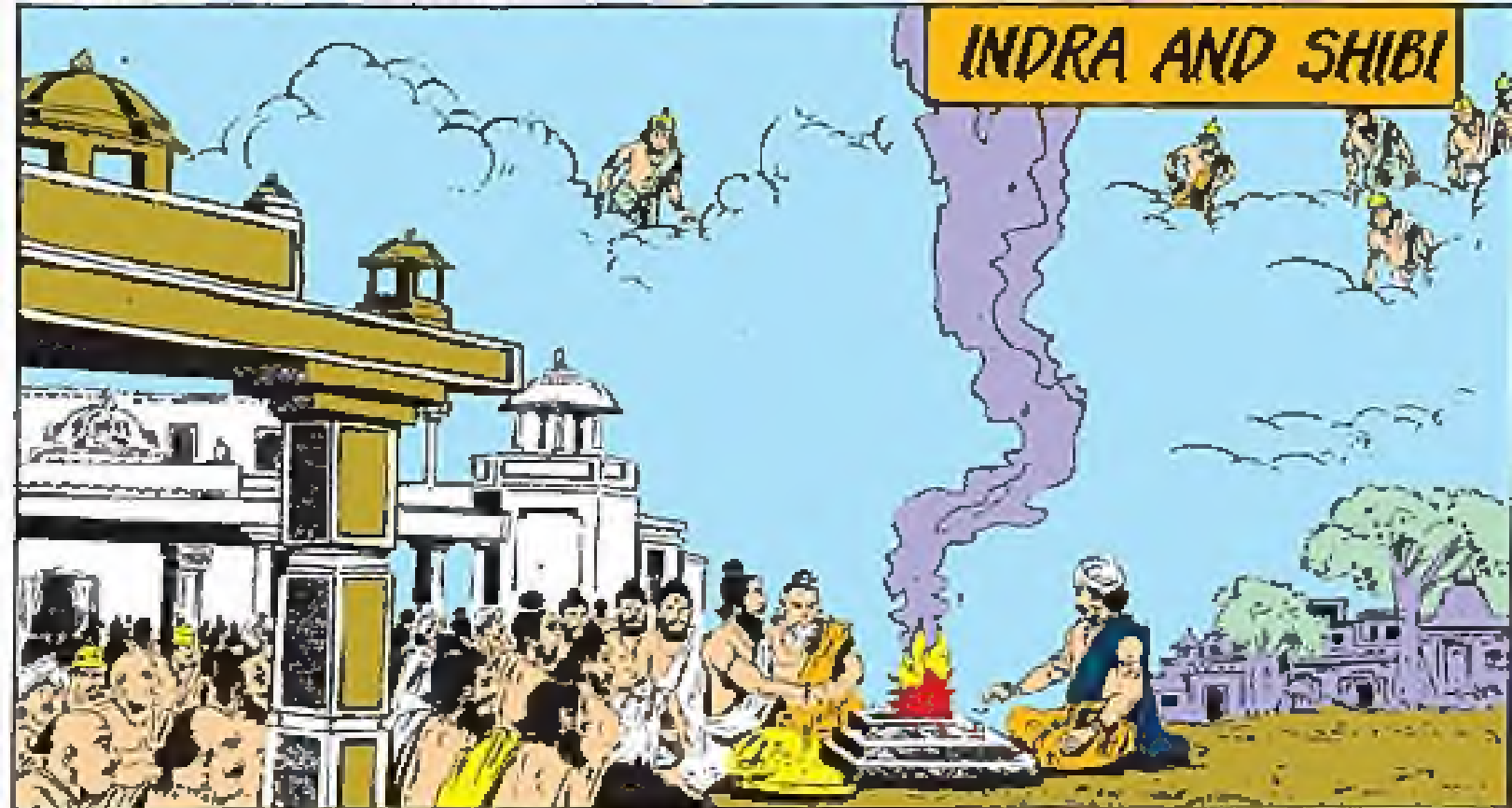


INDRA AND SHIBI



SHIBI RAJA WAS RENOWNED FOR HIS VIRTUE. SO FAMOUS WAS THIS KING, THAT EVEN THE DEVAS CAME OUT OF THEIR CELESTIAL ABODE TO WATCH HIS YAJNAS®

WHEN HE COMPLETES THAT YAJNA, THE LARGE-HEARTED KING WILL ATTAIN THE STATUS OF A DEVA.



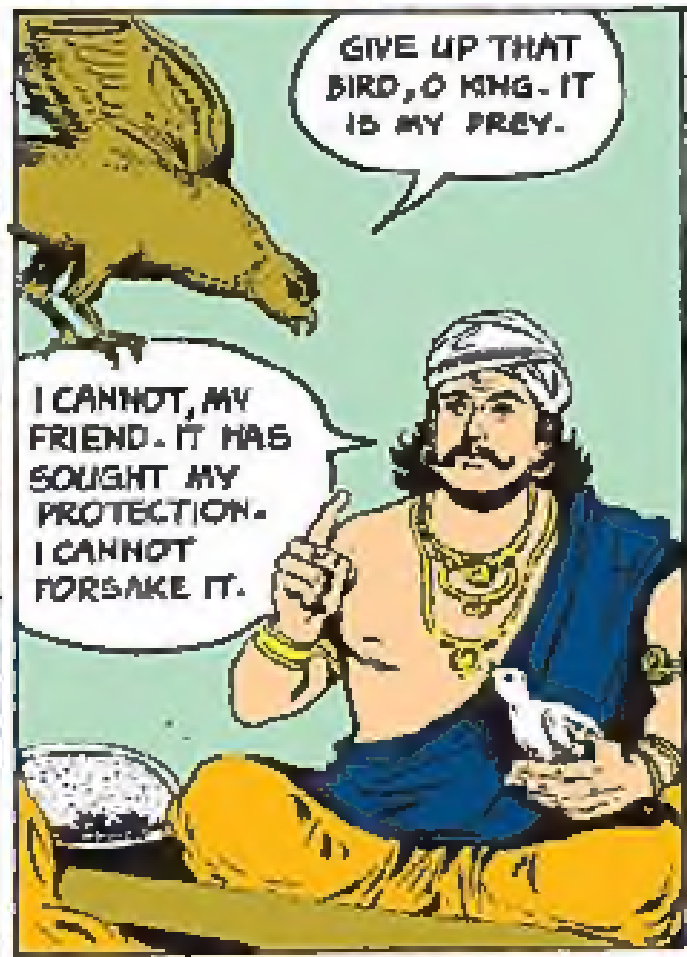
INDRA, KING OF ALL THE DEVAS, AND AGNI, THE GOD OF FIRE, OVERHEARD THESE REMARKS.

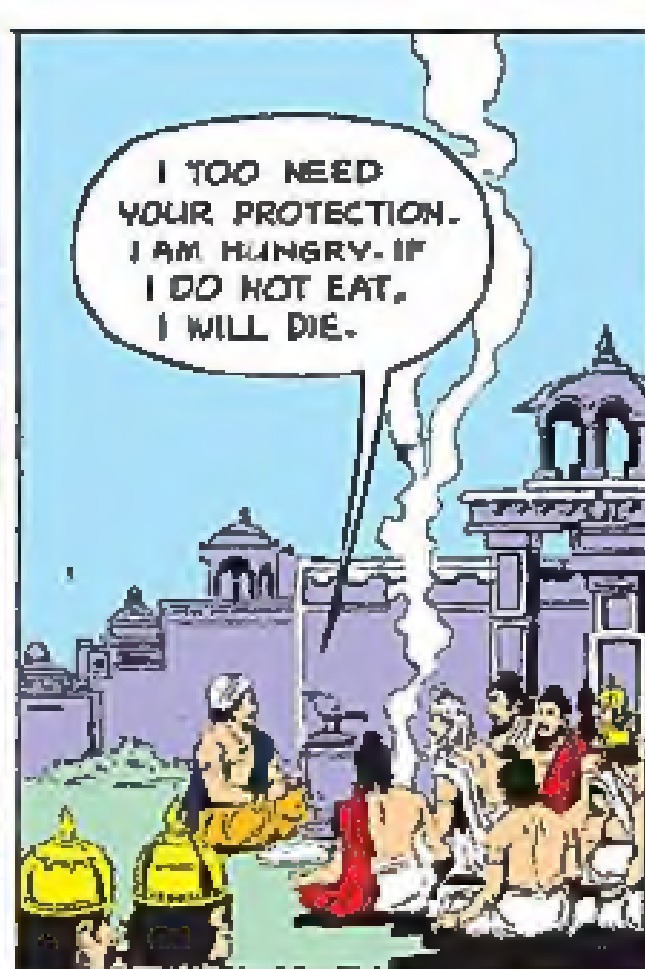
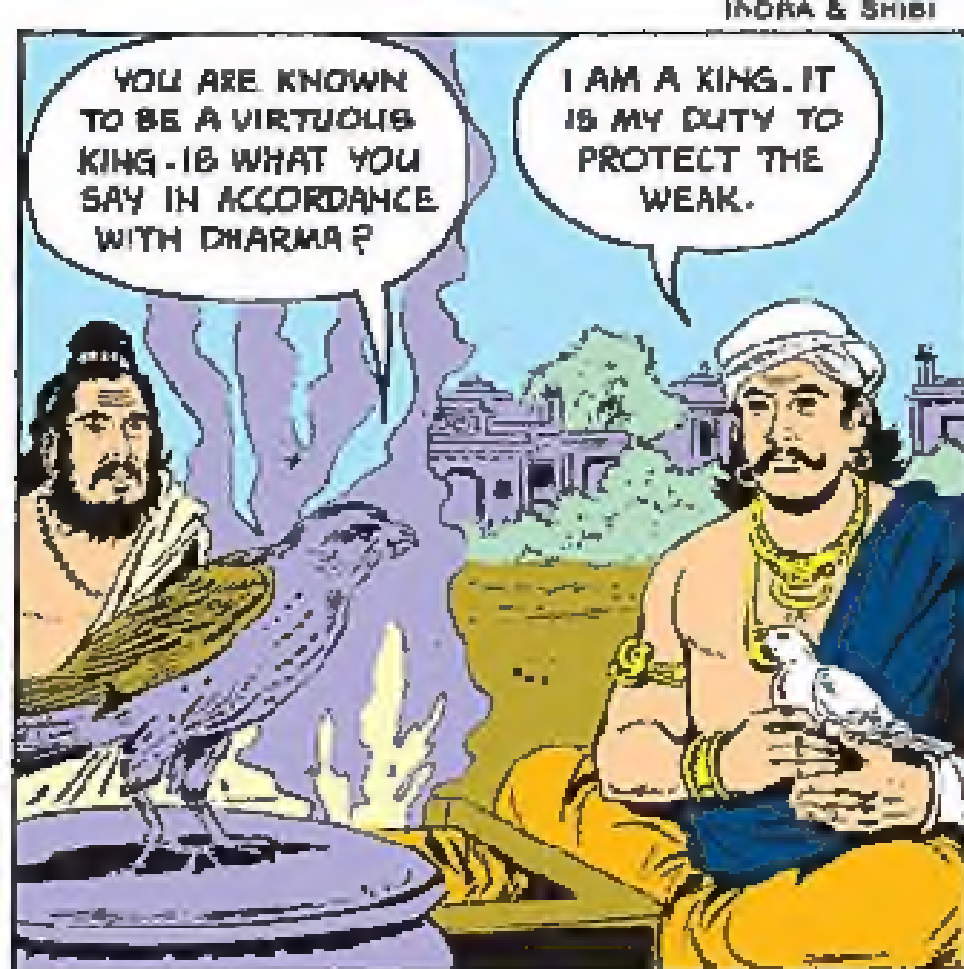
I WOULD STILL TEST THE KING AND WOULD BESTOW BOONS UPON HIM, IF HE PROVES TO BE THE NOBLEST OF KINGS.

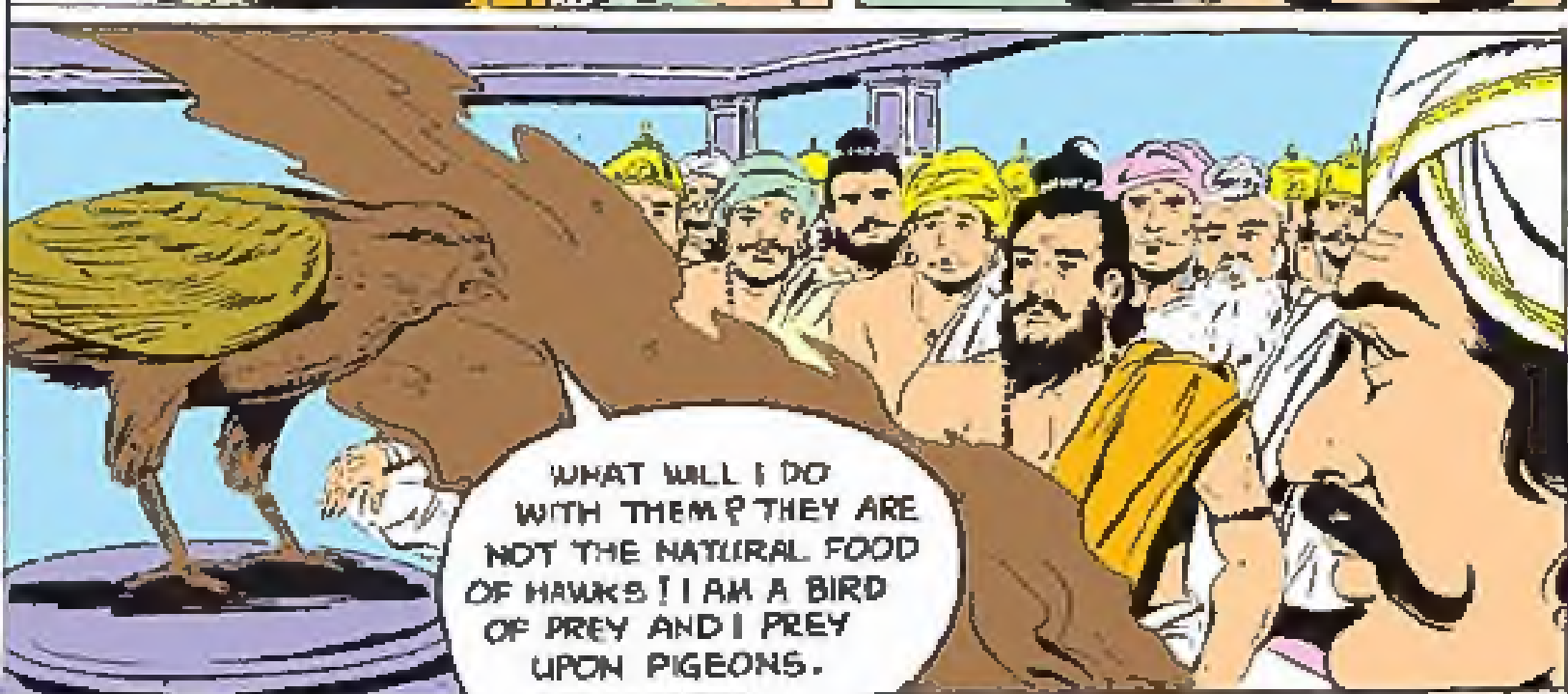
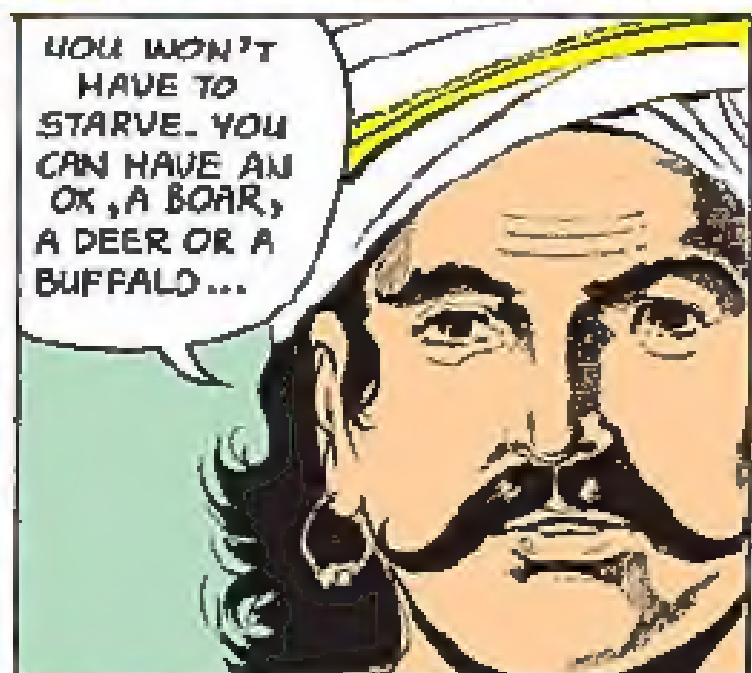



I, TOO, WILL GO WITH YOU. I AM CURIOUS.

A FEW DAYS LATER —






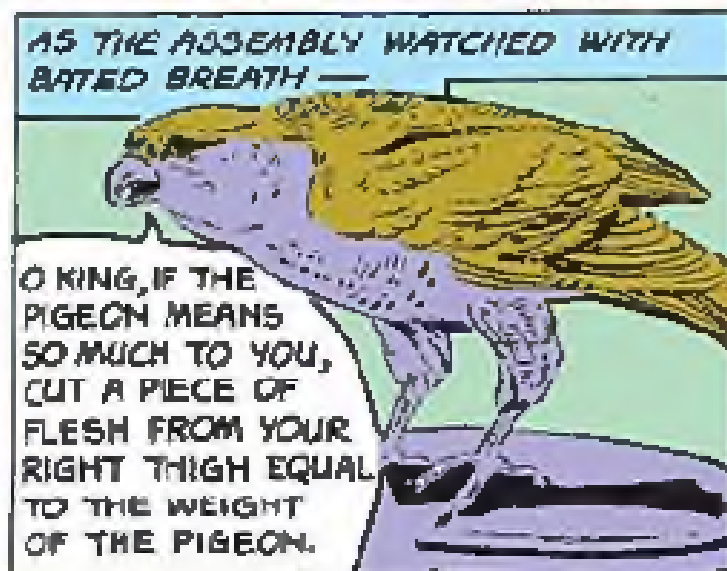




THEREFORE,
O RIGHTEOUS KING,
RELEASE THE
PIGEON FOR ME.

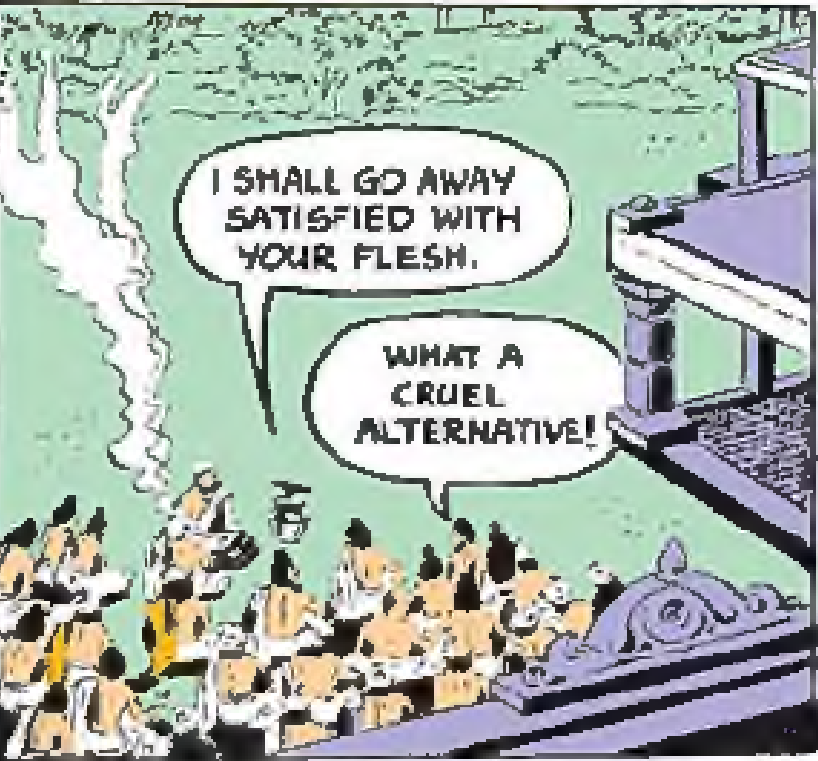


I'LL GIVE YOU ALL
THAT I HAVE, MY
KINGDOM TOO. BUT
NOT THIS PIGEON,
WHICH HAS SOUGHT
MY PROTECTION!



AS THE ASSEMBLY WATCHED WITH
BATED BREATH —


O KING, IF THE
PIGEON MEANS
SO MUCH TO YOU,
CUT A PIECE OF
FLESH FROM YOUR
RIGHT THIGH EQUAL
TO THE WEIGHT
OF THE PIGEON.



I SHALL GO AWAY
SATISFIED WITH
YOUR FLESH.

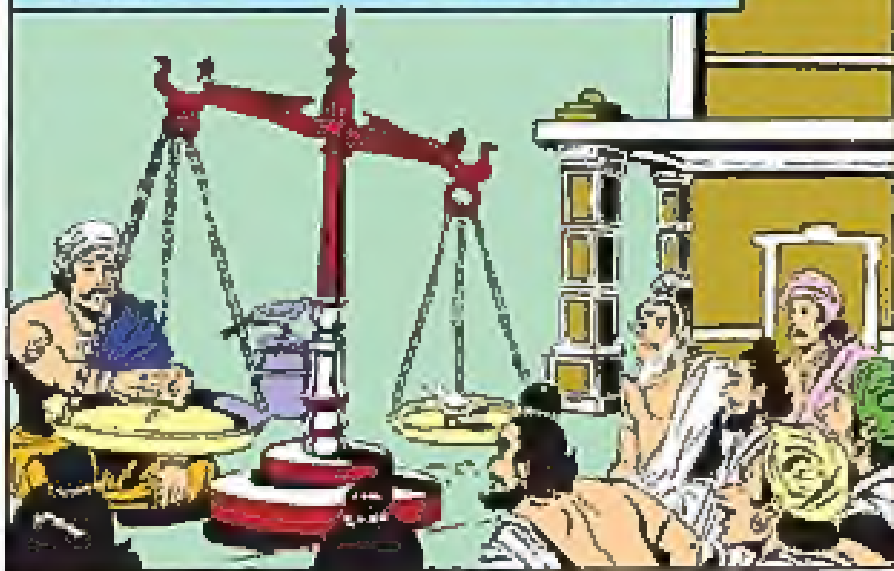
WHAT A
CRUEL
ALTERNATIVE!

BUT SHIBI RAJA DID NOT THINK SO.



O GENEROUS
HAWK, YOU DO
ME A GREAT
FAVOUR.

AND CUTTING OUT HIS FLESH, SHIBI RAJA
WEIGHED IT AGAINST THE PIGEON.



OH! THE PIGEON
IS HEAVY! I WILL
HAVE TO GIVE SOME
MORE OF MY
FLESH.



SHIBI GAVE UP PORTION AFTER PORTION OF HIS FLESH BUT THE PIGEON
WEIGHED MORE.

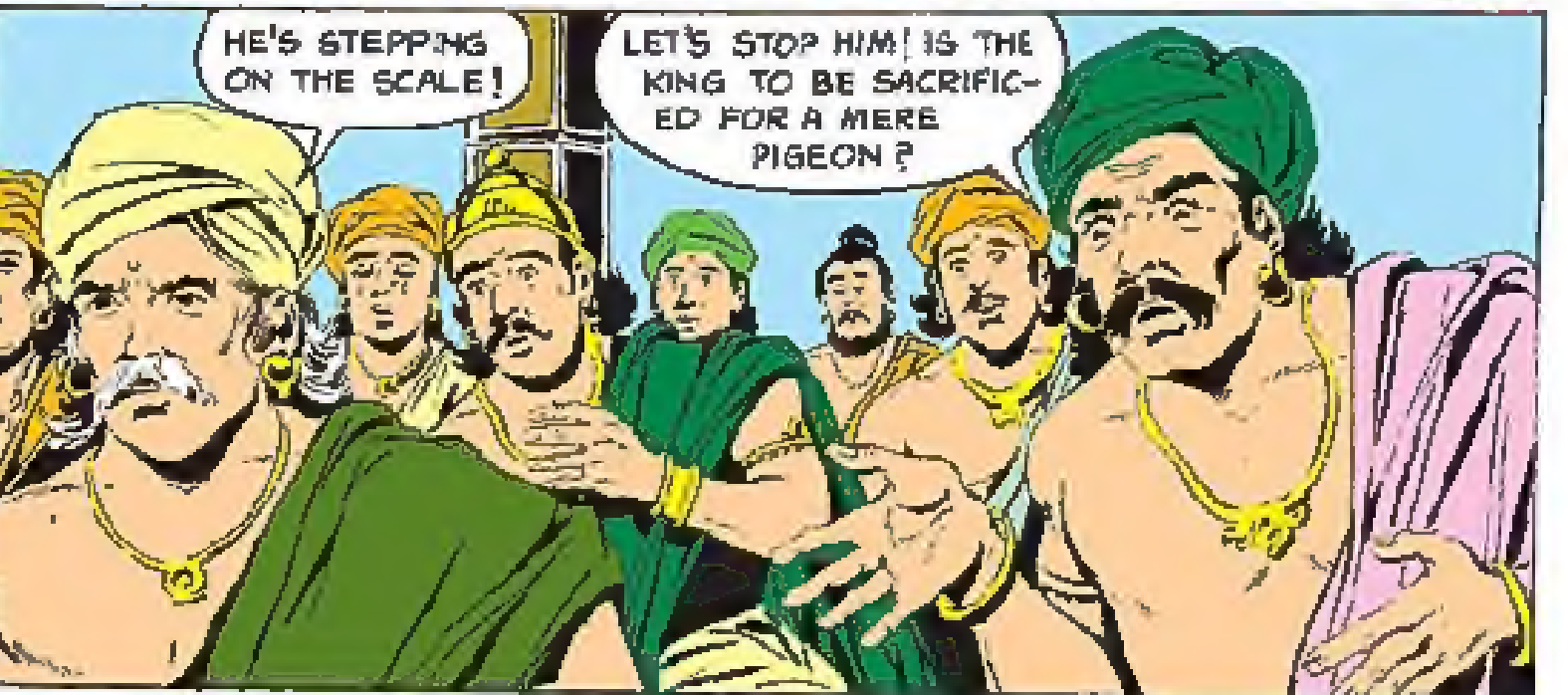


ALAS! HE IS
BARE TO HIS
VERY BONES.
WHAT WILL
HE DO NOW?

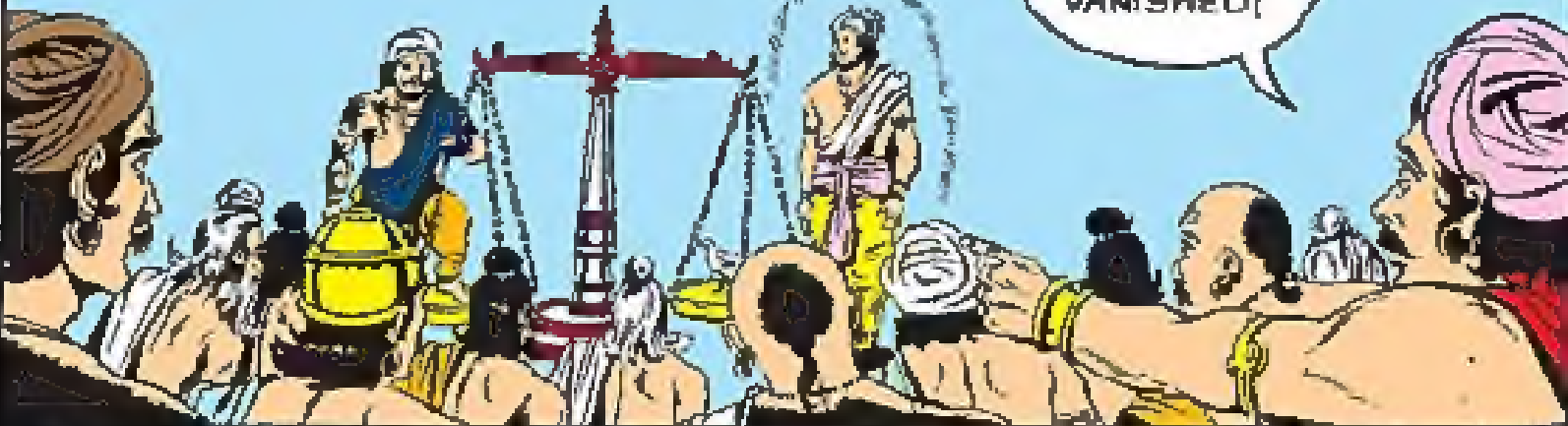
LOOK!

HE'S STEPPING
ON THE SCALE!

LET'S STOP HIM! IS THE
KING TO BE SACRIFICED
FOR A MERE
PIGEON?



LOOK! THE
HAWK HAS
VANISHED!



AND SHIBI BECAME WHOLE AGAIN.



THE NEXT MOMENT —

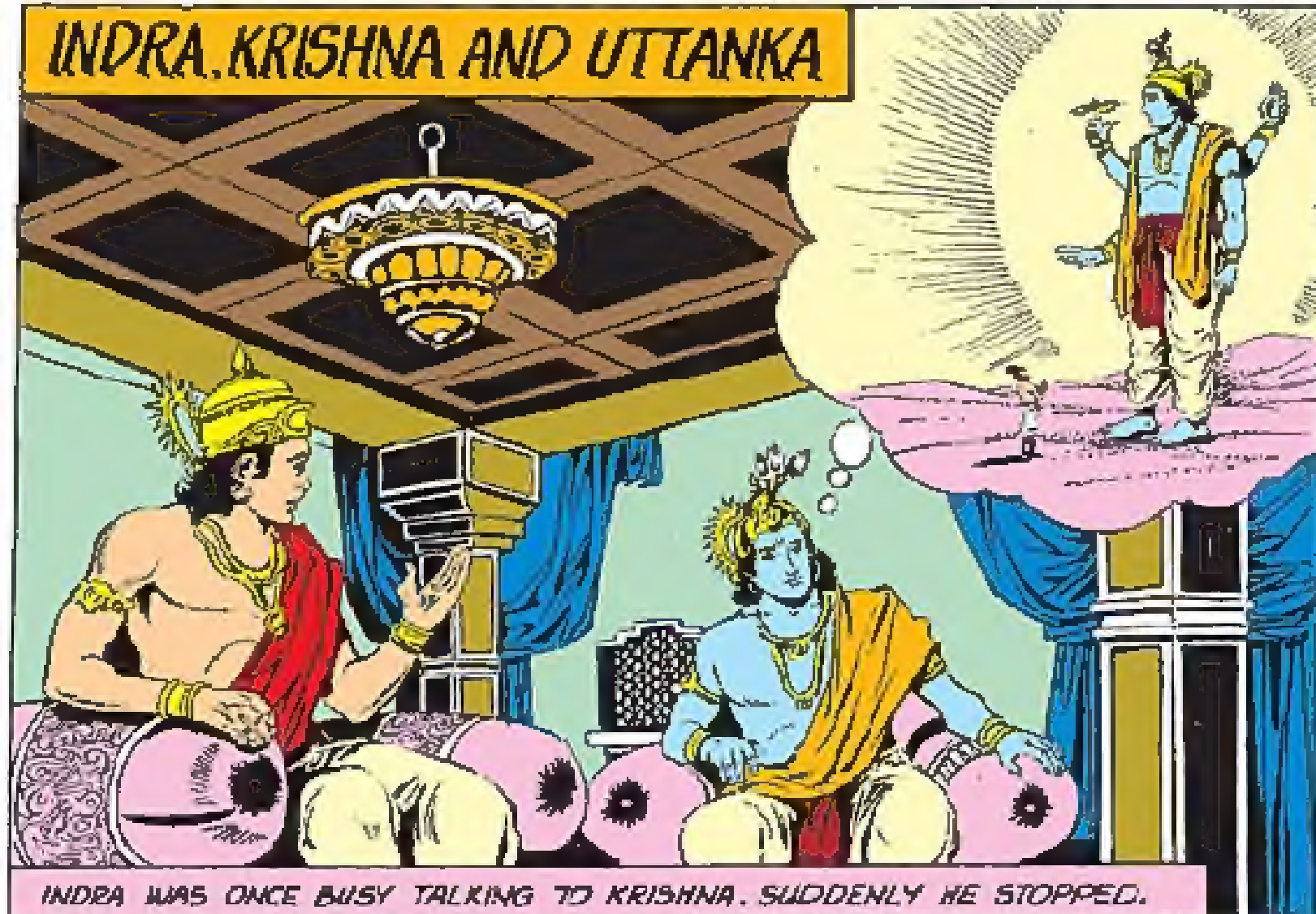
O KINGS, I AM INDRA. THE
PIGEON WAS NONE OTHER
THAN AGNI. WE WANTED
TO TEST YOU AND WE
FIND YOU JUSTLY
FAMOUS.



YOUR NAME SHALL
REMAIN IMMORTAL
ON EARTH; AND A
PLACE WILL BE
KEPT FOR YOU
IN HEAVEN.



INDRA, KRISHNA AND UTTANKA



INDRA WAS ONCE BUSY TALKING TO KRISHNA. SUDDENLY HE STOPPED.

HE WAS A TRIFLE ANNOYED.



WHAT'S THE MATTER, KRISHNA? YOUR ATTENTION WANDERS. WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?



OH! ABOUT SAGE UTTANKA. A FEW DAYS AGO, I REVEALED MYSELF TO HIM IN MY VISHVAROOPA* AS HE MEDITATED IN THE DESERT.

"I OFFERED HIM A BOON."

THAT
I HAVE
BEHELD YOU
IS BOON
ENOUGH,
O KRISHNA!



"WHEN I INSISTED, HOWEVER —"

IF I MUST, THEN LET
ME HAVE WATER WHEN-
EVER I NEED IT. FOR
WATER IS SCARCE IN
THESE DESERTS.



SO BE IT.
WHENEVER YOU
FEEL THIRSTY,
THINK OF ME.



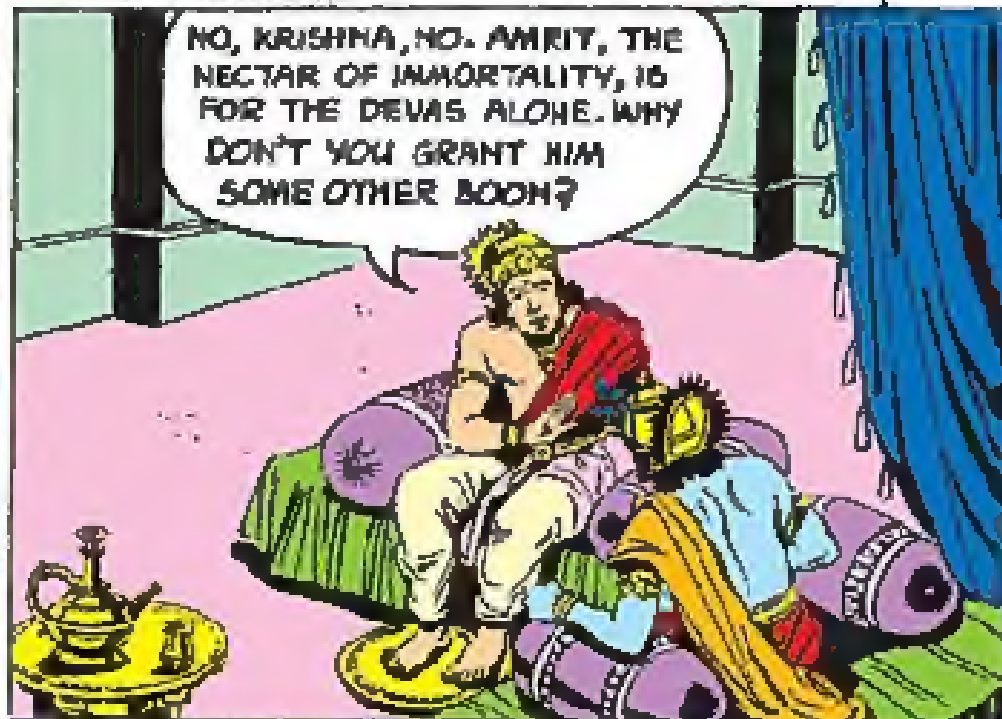
HE IS THINKING OF ME
NOW. HE IS AN ENLIGHT-
ENED SOUL. I WAS
WONDERING...

WHAT?





WHY NOT GIVE HIM AMRIT INSTEAD OF WATER?



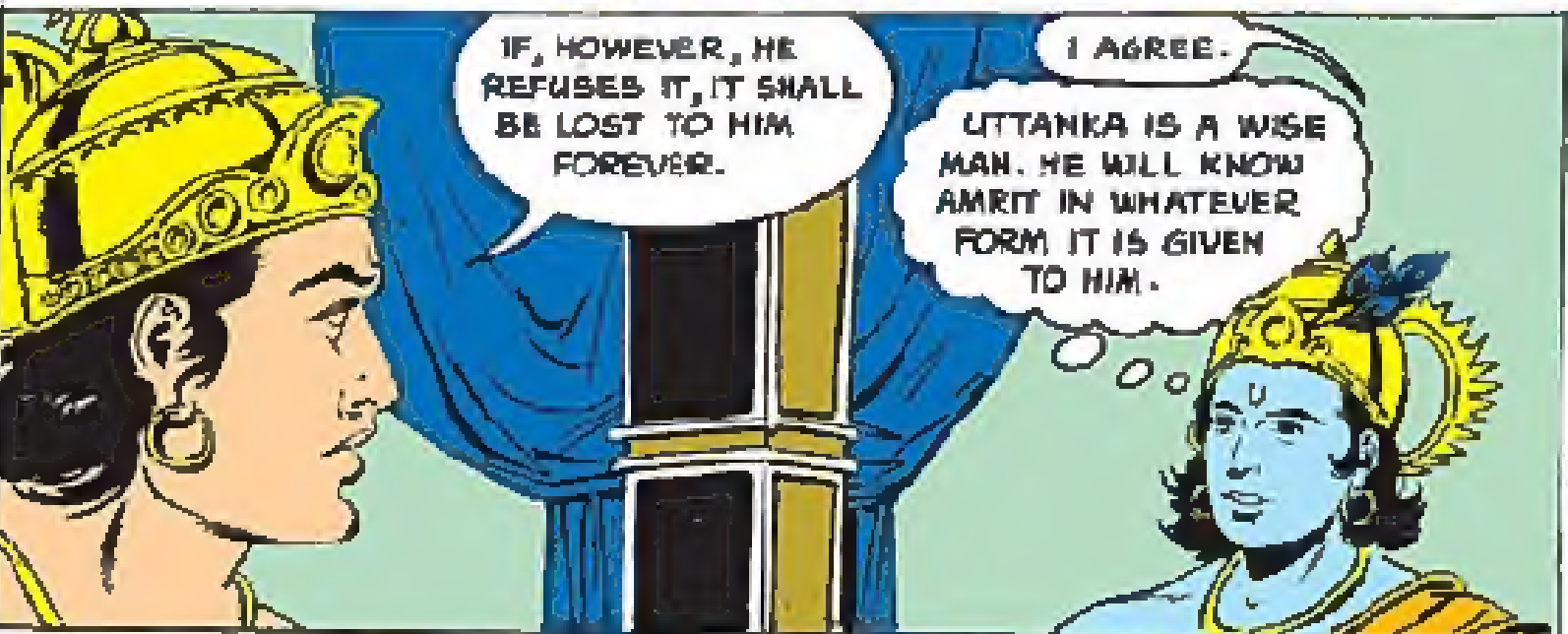
NO, KRISHNA, NO. AMRIT, THE NECTAR OF IMMORTALITY, IS FOR THE DEVAS ALONE. WHY DON'T YOU GRANT HIM SOME OTHER BOON?



HE DESERVES NOTHING LESS. DO NOT STOP ME, INDRA.



ALL RIGHT. IF HE MUST HAVE AMRIT THEN LET ME TAKE IT TO HIM.

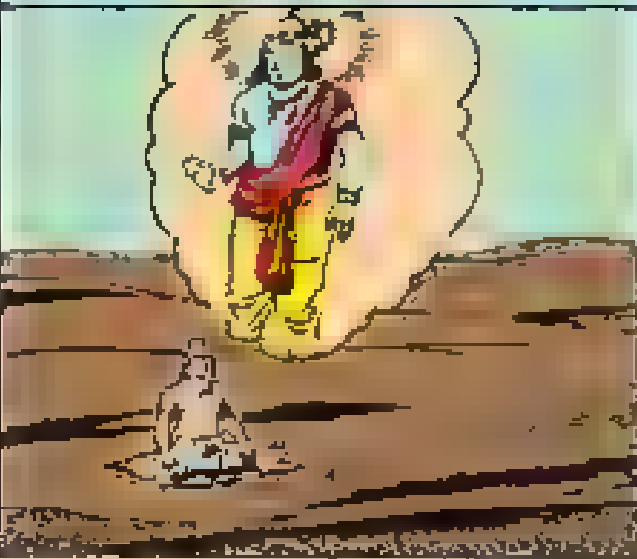


IF, HOWEVER, HE REFUSES IT, IT SHALL BE LOST TO HIM FOREVER.

I AGREE.

UTTANKA IS A WISE MAN. HE WILL KNOW AMRIT IN WHATEVER FORM IT IS GIVEN TO HIM.

MEANWHILE, UTTANKA WAS STILL THINKING ABOUT KRISHNA.



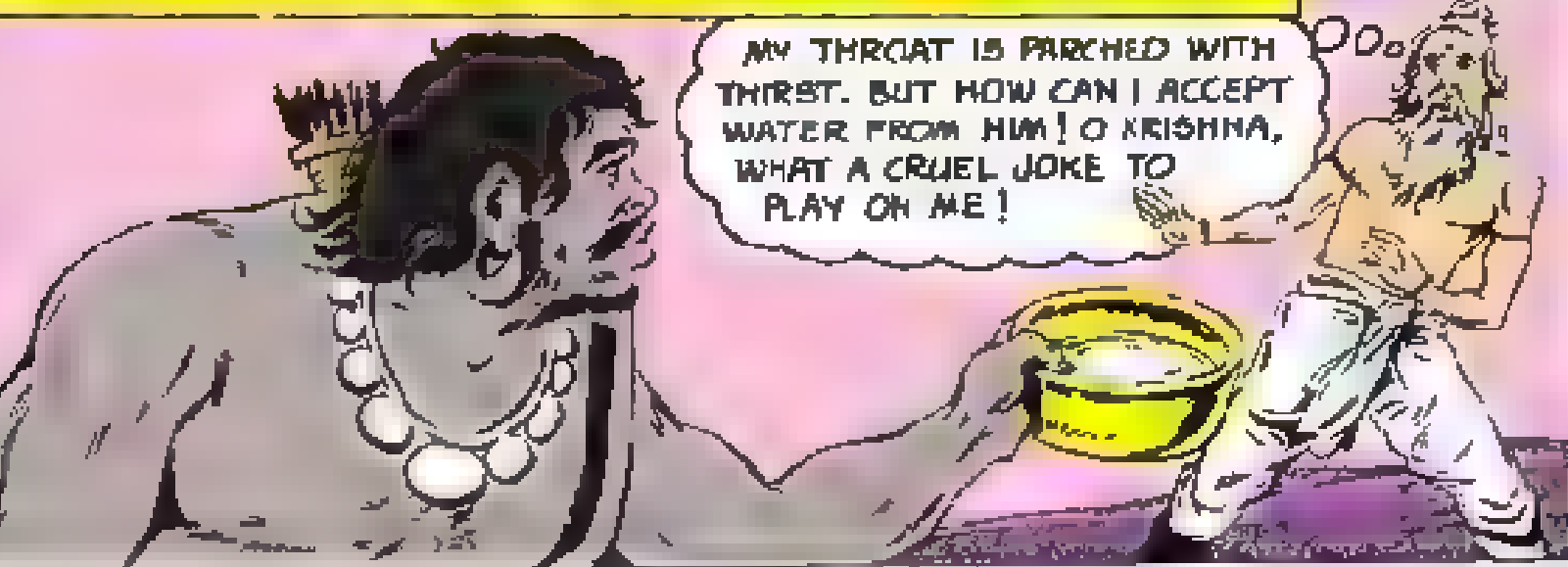
SUDDENLY —



TO HIS DISMAY HE SAW A CHANDALA* APPROACHING HIM.



UTTANKA WAS AGHAST. HE SHRANK AWAY FROM THE CHANDALA.



WHY DO YOU HESITATE? DRINK, UTTANKA, LEST YOU DIE OF THIRST.

UTTANKA FLEW INTO A RAGE.

WHAT! ACCEPT WATER FROM A CHANDALA! BEGONE! I'D RATHER DIE OF THIRST THAN TOUCH THAT WATER AND BE POLLUTED!

THE NEXT MOMENT THE CHANDALA HAD VANISHED.

BEFORE UTTANKA COULD COLLECT HIMSELF — WHO SHOULD STAND BEFORE HIM BUT KRISHNA!

OH KRISHNA! IT WAS NOT FAIR TO SEND ME WATER THROUGH A CHANDALA!

THAT WAS NO CHANDALA.
IT WAS INDRA BRINGING
AMRIT FOR YOU. NOW
YOU WILL NEVER
RECEIVE IT IN THIS
BIRTH!



AND KRISHNA TOLD HIM ALL
ABOUT HIS BET WITH INDRA.

HE WHO DISCRIMINATES
BETWEEN A BRAHMAN
AND A CHANDALA
DOES NOT DESERVE
AMRIT.



YOUR FAULT HAS
BEEN GREAT. YET MY
BOON WILL NOT BE
WITHDRAWN.

PARDON
ME, LORD.



WHEN YOU ARE
THIRSTY, CLOUDS WILL
RISE OVER THIS DESERT
AND GIVE YOU WATER TO
DRINK. THEY SHALL BE
KNOWN AS THE
UTTANKA CLOUDS.

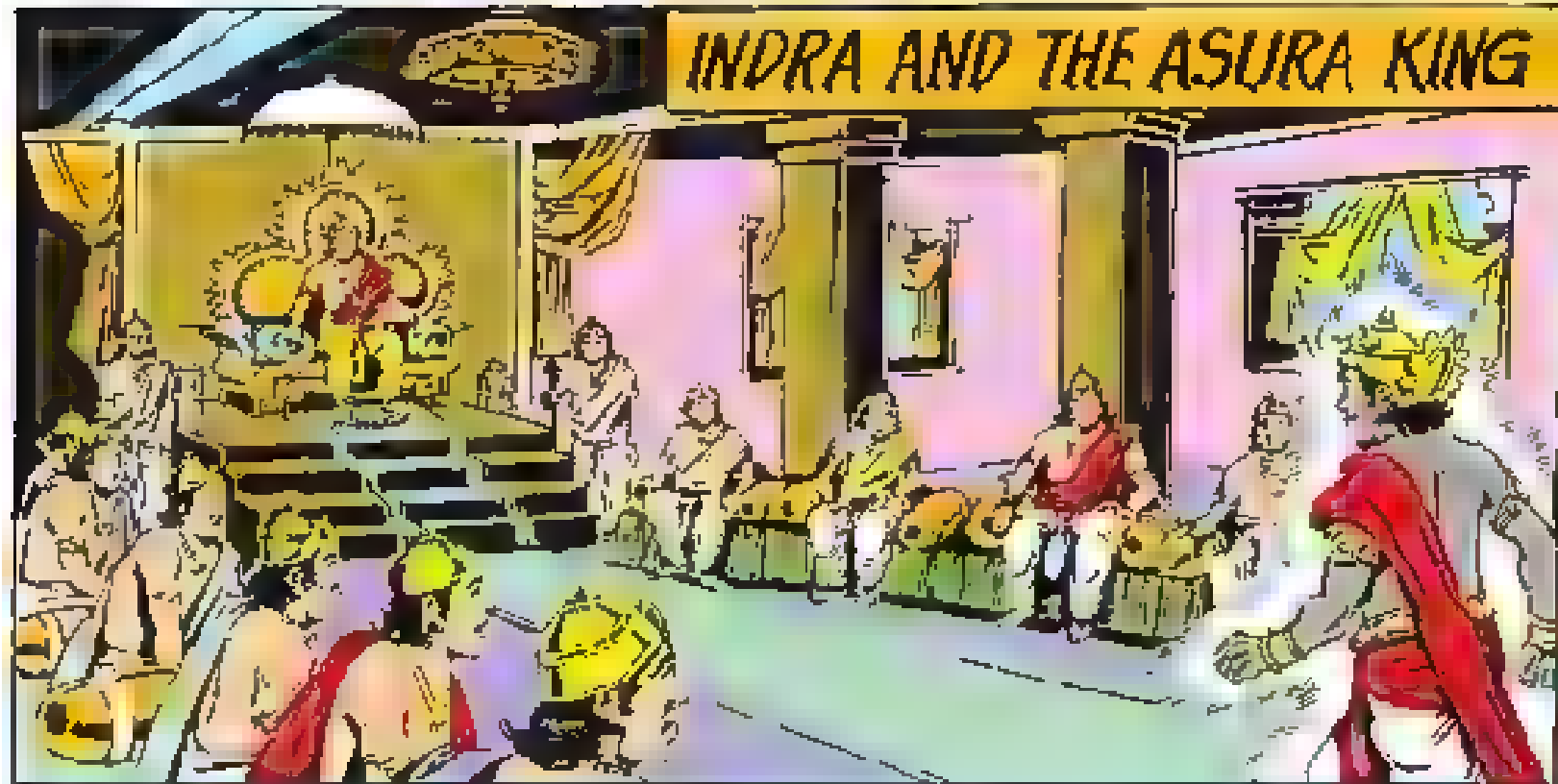


I AM
GRATEFUL
TO YOU,
LORD.



AND TO THIS DAY, UTTANKA CLOUDS RISE
AND SHOWER RAIN ON THE ARID DESERT.

INDRA AND THE ASURA KING



IN THE DAYS OF YORE, THE DEVAS AND ASURAS WERE EVER AT WAR, FIGHTING FOR SUPREMACY OVER HEAVEN, EARTH AND THE NETHER REGIONS. ONE DAY, A VIRTUOUS ASURA KING CAME TO AMARAVATI, THE CAPITAL OF INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS.

INDRA WAS PERPLEXED.

HE IS THE SWORN ENEMY OF OUR RACE. YET HE COMES ALONE AND UNARMED!



SOON THE PERPLEXITY TURNED TO ALARM. THE ASURA SEEMED TO HAVE A STRANGE EFFECT ON THE DEVAS.

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THEM? THEY SEEM TO BE ENCHANTED BY HIM!



HOW CALM AND
CONFIDENT HE
IS!

THE STRANGE
LIGHT EMANATING
FROM HIM ENVELOPES
US IN ITS WARMTH!



INDRA SUDDENLY FELT VERY WEAK.

THEY ARE
BOWING BEFORE
HIM, IGNORING
ME, THEIR KING



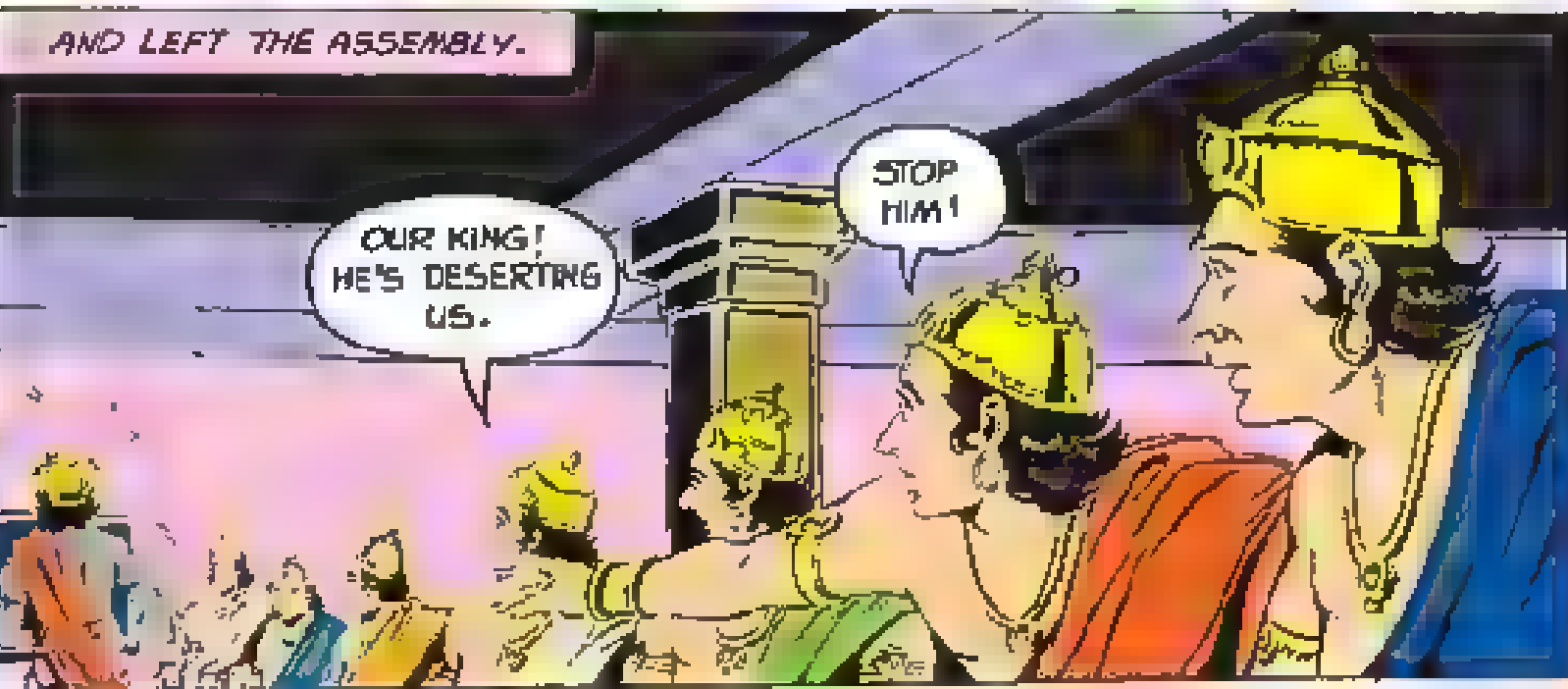
NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO, INDRA QUIETLY
GOT UP...



AND LEFT THE ASSEMBLY.

OUR KING!
HE'S DESERTING
US.

STOP
HIM!





DO NOT PANIC.
I SHALL RULE
OVER YOU AND
PROTECT YOU.



AND THUS THE ASURA BECAME MASTER OF
THE THREE WORLDS.



MEANWHILE —

I MUST GET
TO THE SECRET
OF THE ASURA'S
STRANGE POWER.



A FEW DAYS LATER, A BRAHMAN STOOD
BEFORE THE ASURA KING.

I WISH TO BECOME
YOUR DISCIPLE, O
VIRTUOUS KING.

I HAVE NO TIME
FOR YOU, O
BRAHMAN I AM
BUSY RULING OVER
THE THREE
WORLDS.

MAY I AT LEAST LISTEN TO YOU WHEN, IN YOUR MOMENTS OF LEISURE, YOU CHANCE TO SPEAK ON CONDUCT?

HE IS A DETERMINED MAN. HE WILL MAKE A GOOD DISCIPLE.

YES YOU MAY. I SHALL ALSO TRY TO FIND TIME TO TEACH YOU.

AND I WILL WAIT UPON YOU AND SERVE YOU AS MY GURU.

THE BRAHMAN DULY TREATED THE ASURA AS HIS GURU AND WAITED UPON HIM HAND AND FOOT.

WHAT AN EXCELLENT DISCIPLE! HIS EAGERNESS IN LISTENING TO ME IS MATCHED ONLY BY HIS HUMILITY IN SERVING ME.

IN THE COURSE OF HIS LEARNING, THERE WAS ONE QUESTION WHICH THE BRAHMAN PERSISTED IN ASKING.

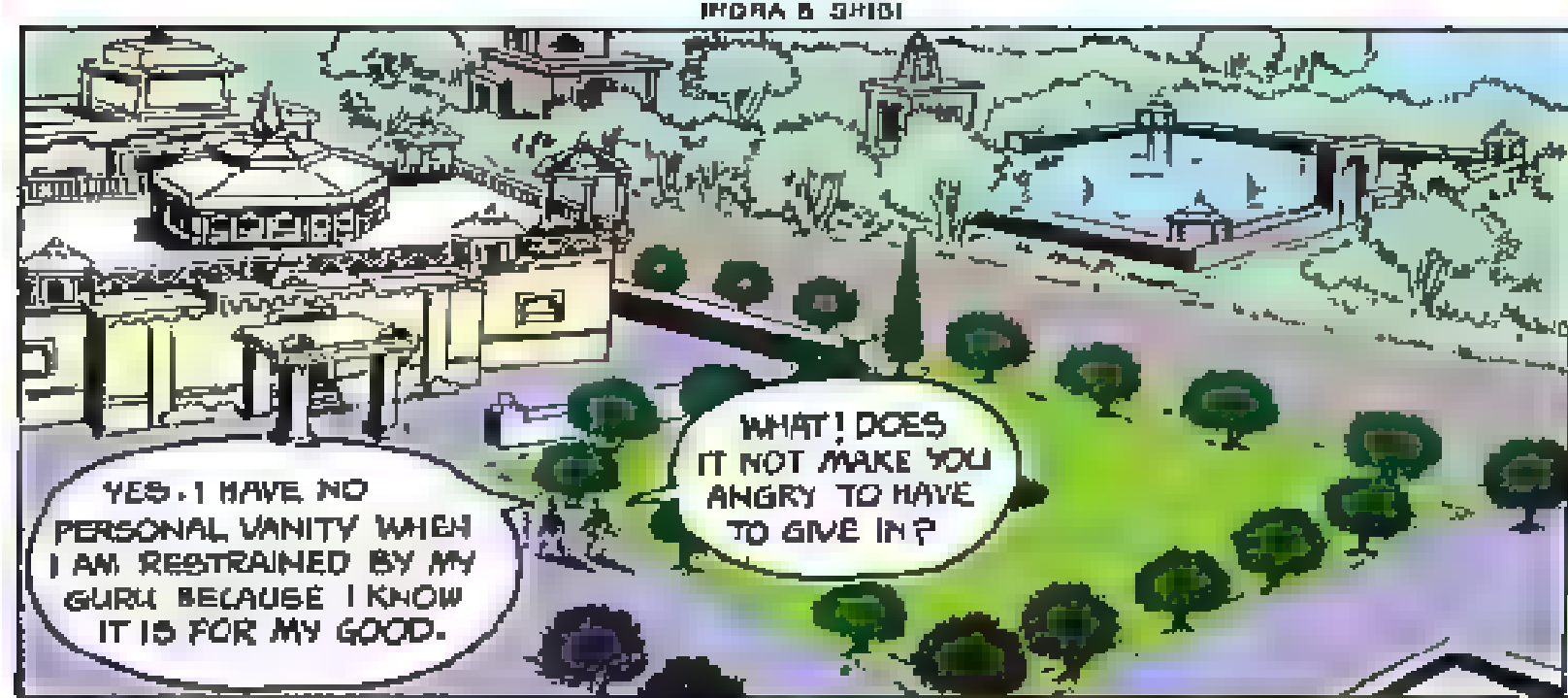
HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO WIN OVER THE THREE WORLDS? TELL ME, O KING, WHAT MEANS DID YOU USE?

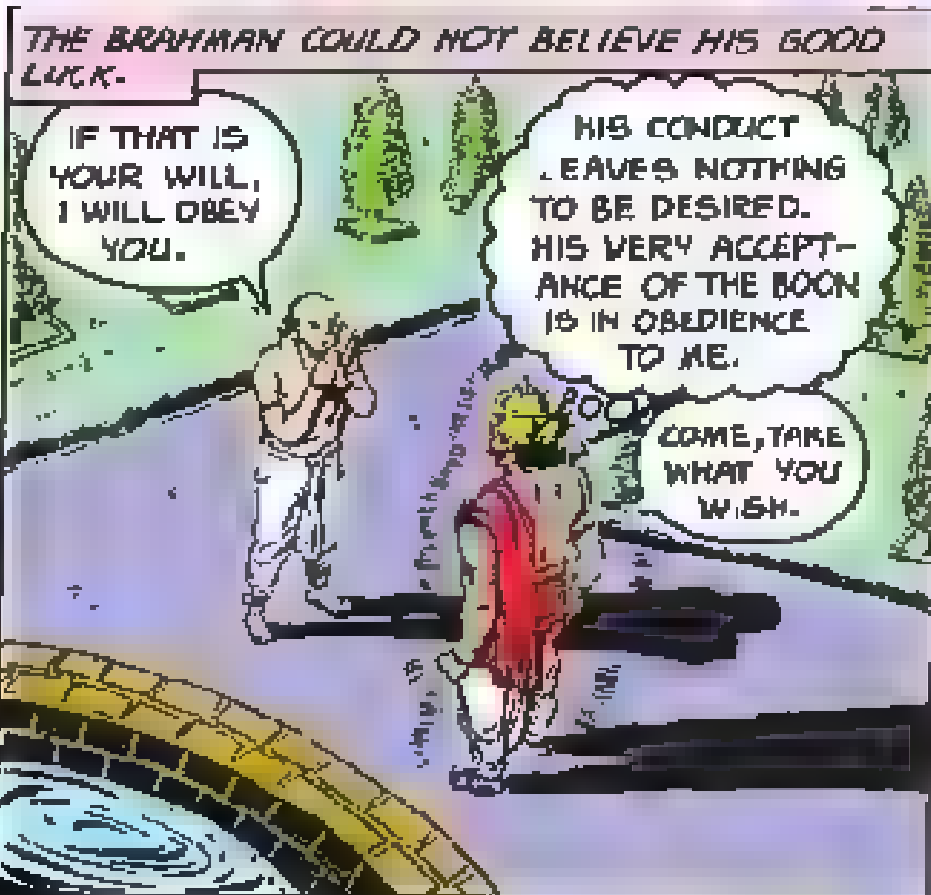
MY UNQUESTIONING OBEDIENCE TO SHUKRACHARYA, MY PRECEPTOR. MY ACTIONS ARE BASED ON HIS PRECEPTS.

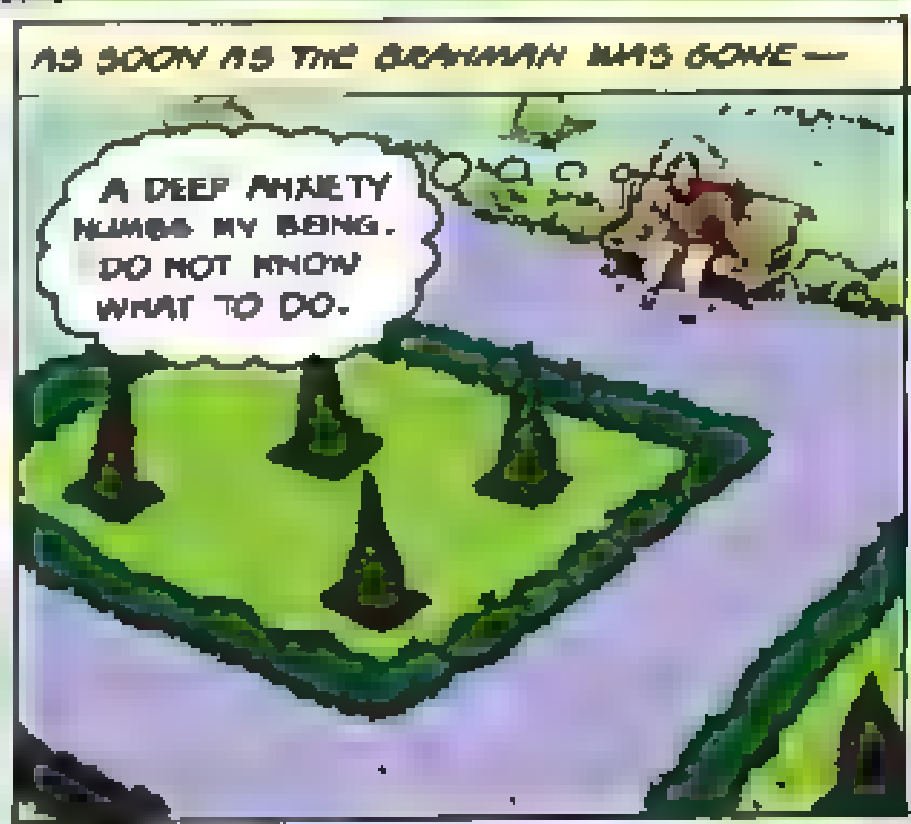
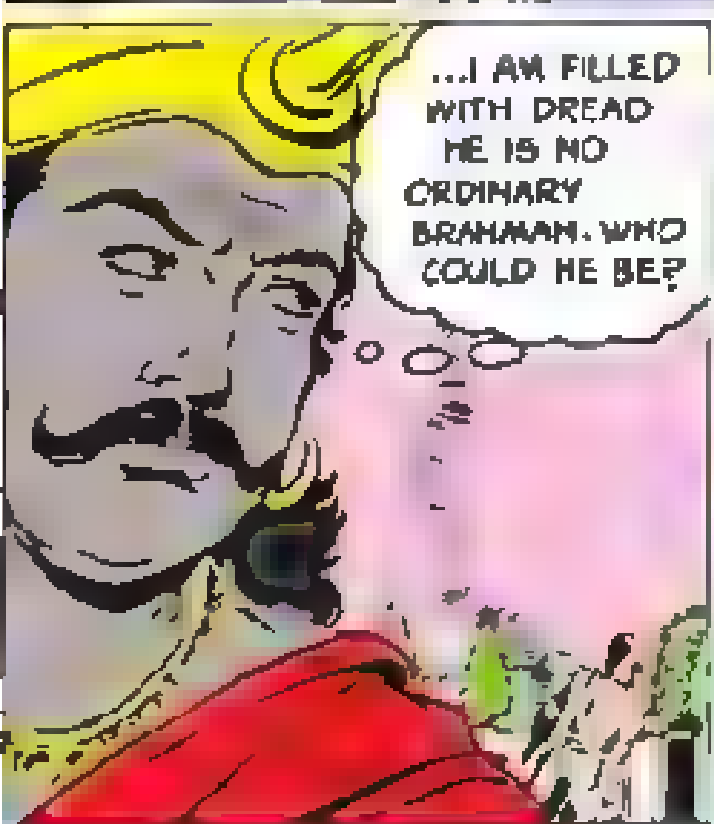
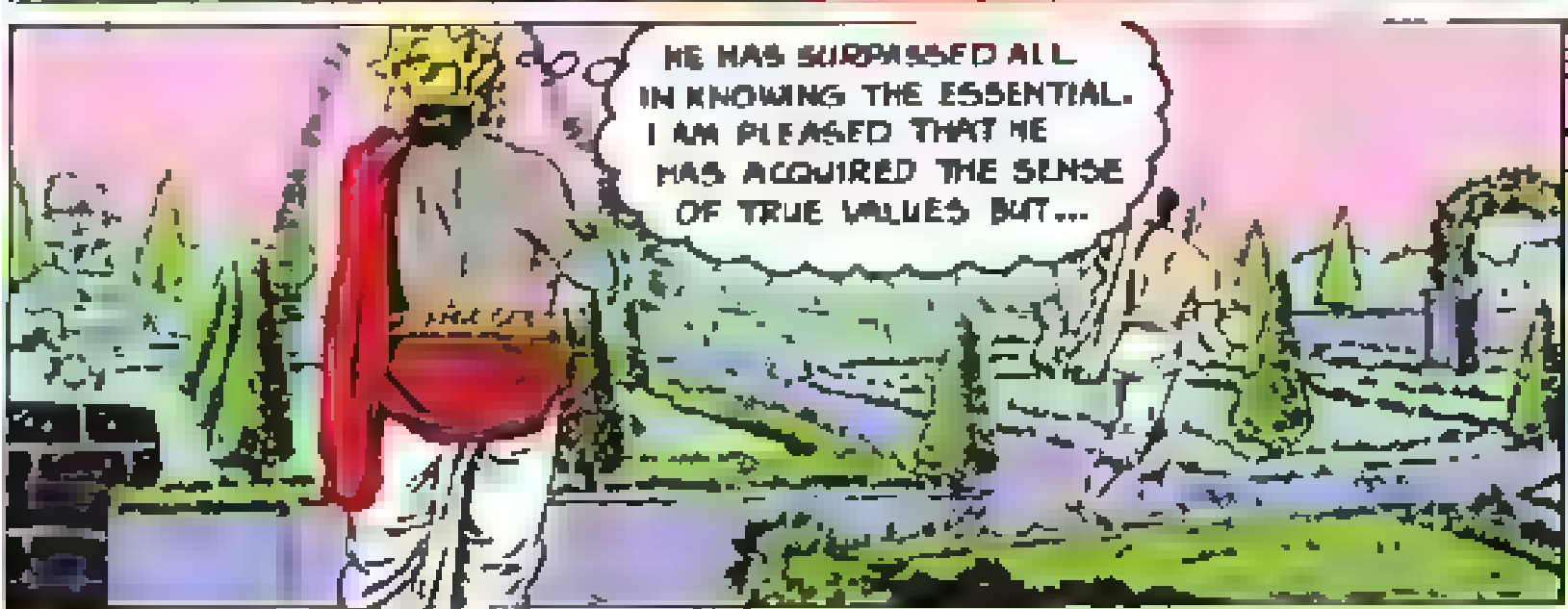
ALAS! I CAN'T SAY THAT I HAVE ALWAYS TAKEN THE ADVICE OF MY GURU, BRHASPATI!

THE BRAHMAN WAS QUIET FOR A WHILE. THEN—

DO YOU ALWAYS OBEY SHUKRACHARYA? EVEN IF HIS ADVICE GOES AGAINST YOUR WISHES?







THE ASURA SAT BROODING.
SUDDENLY —

THE ASURA WAS STARTLED.

WH-WHO
ARE
YOU ?

I AM THE
EMBODIMENT OF
YOUR SPOTLESS
CONDUCT GIVEN
AWAY BY YOU,
I DWELL IN THE
BRAHMAN HENCE
FORTH.

AND THE FORM VANISHED.

WHAT HAVE
I DONE !

I, TOO,
SHALL
GO TO
THAT
BRAHMAN

WHO ARE YOU?

I AM RIGHTEOUSNESS. I LIVE WHERE SPOTLESS CONDUCT LIVES. I MUST LEAVE YOU

AS SOON AS RIGHTEOUSNESS VANISHED, A THIRD FORM EMERGED FROM THE ASURA.

I AM TRUTH. I SHALL LEAVE YOU, FOLLOWING THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

WHEN TRUTH VANISHED—

I AM THE EMBODIMENT OF GOOD DEEDS. I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT TRUTH. SO I FOLLOW TRUTH.

THE NEXT MOMENT ANOTHER FORM EMERGED FROM THE ASURA WRITHING AND ROARING AS IF IN PAIN. FOR A MOMENT THE ASURA FORGOT HIS OWN PREDICAMENT

O BEING, WHY DO YOU CRY? WHO ARE YOU?

I AM POWER. LOVED TO RESIDE IN YOU BUT I AM COMPELLED TO FOLLOW GOOD DEEDS.

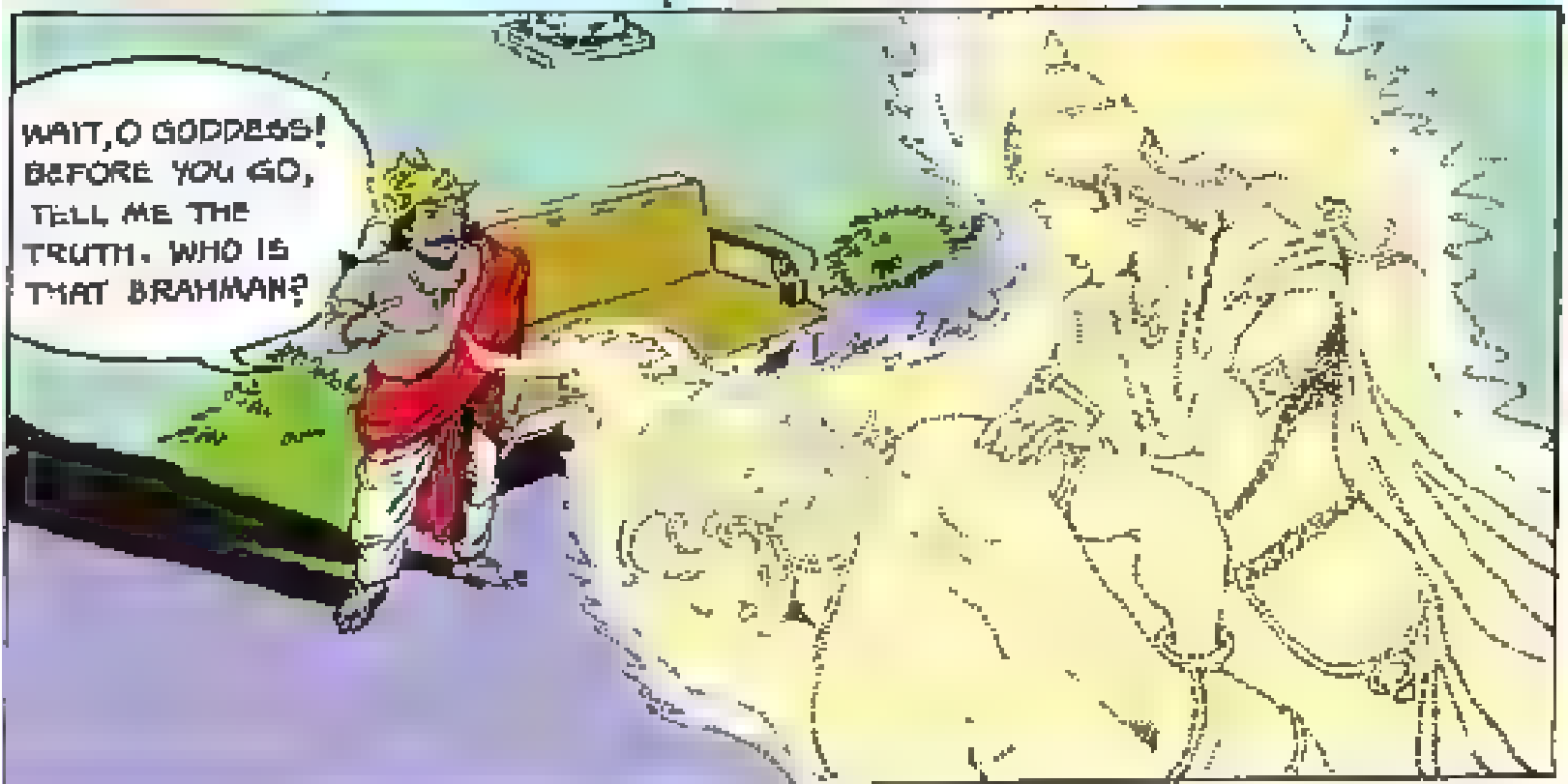
AND GOOD DEEDS, TOO, VANISHED

THE NEXT MOMENT —

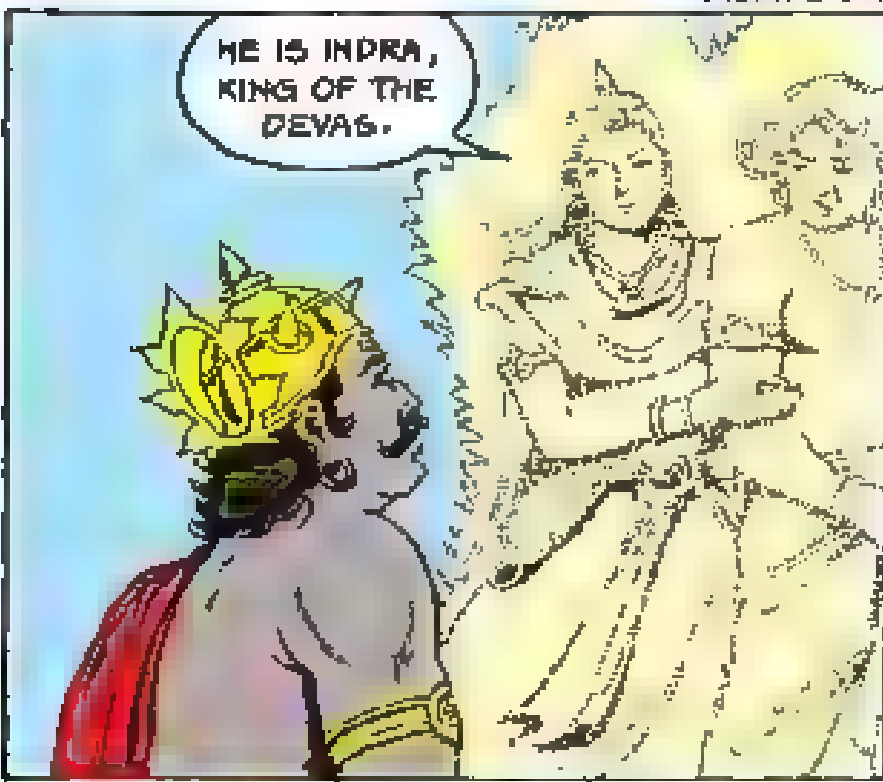
WHO ARE YOU,
O RADIANT
ONE ?

I AM THE GODDESS
OF PROSPERITY.
WITHOUT POWER
I HAVE NO
LIFE ...


AND HE DEPENDS
ON GOOD DEEDS ! SO
I SHALL HELP HIM
FOLLOW THE WAY
OF GOOD DEEDS —
TO THE BRAHMAN.




WAIT, O GODDESS!
BEFORE YOU GO,
TELL ME THE
TRUTH. WHO IS
THAT BRAHMAN?



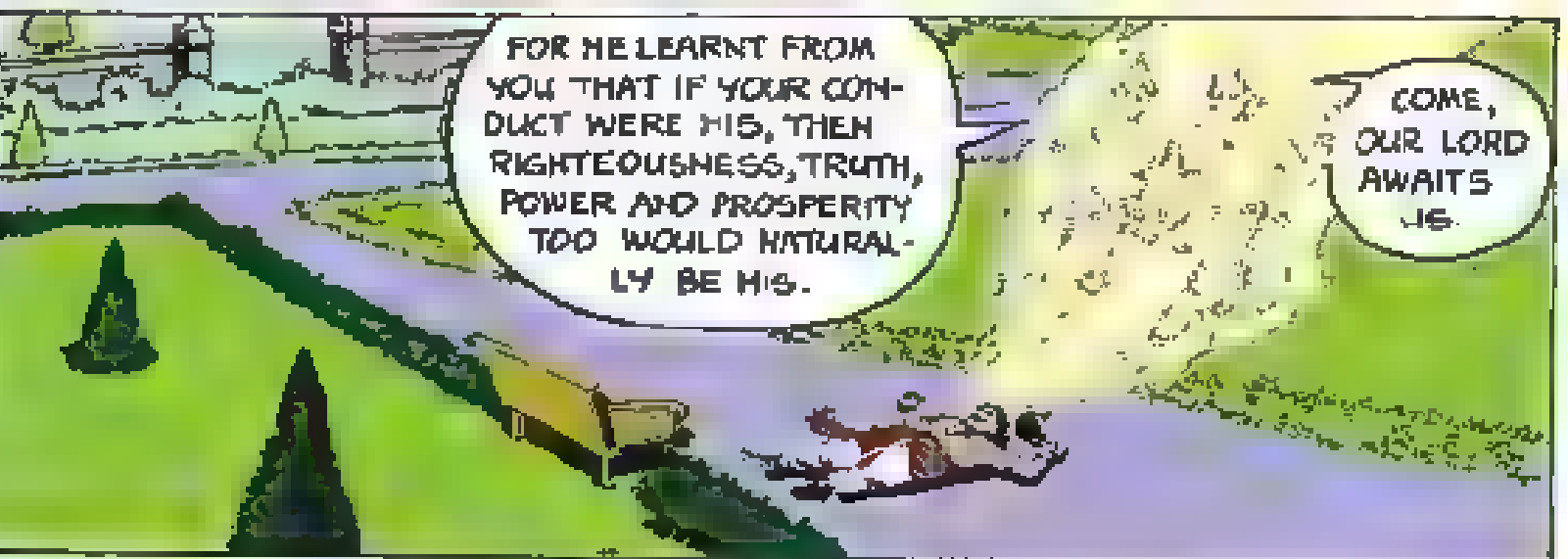
HE IS INDRA,
KING OF THE
DEVAS.



INSTRUCTED
BY YOU, HE KNEW
THAT IT WAS BY
YOUR CONDUCT
ALONE THAT
YOU CONQUERED
THE THREE
WORLDS.



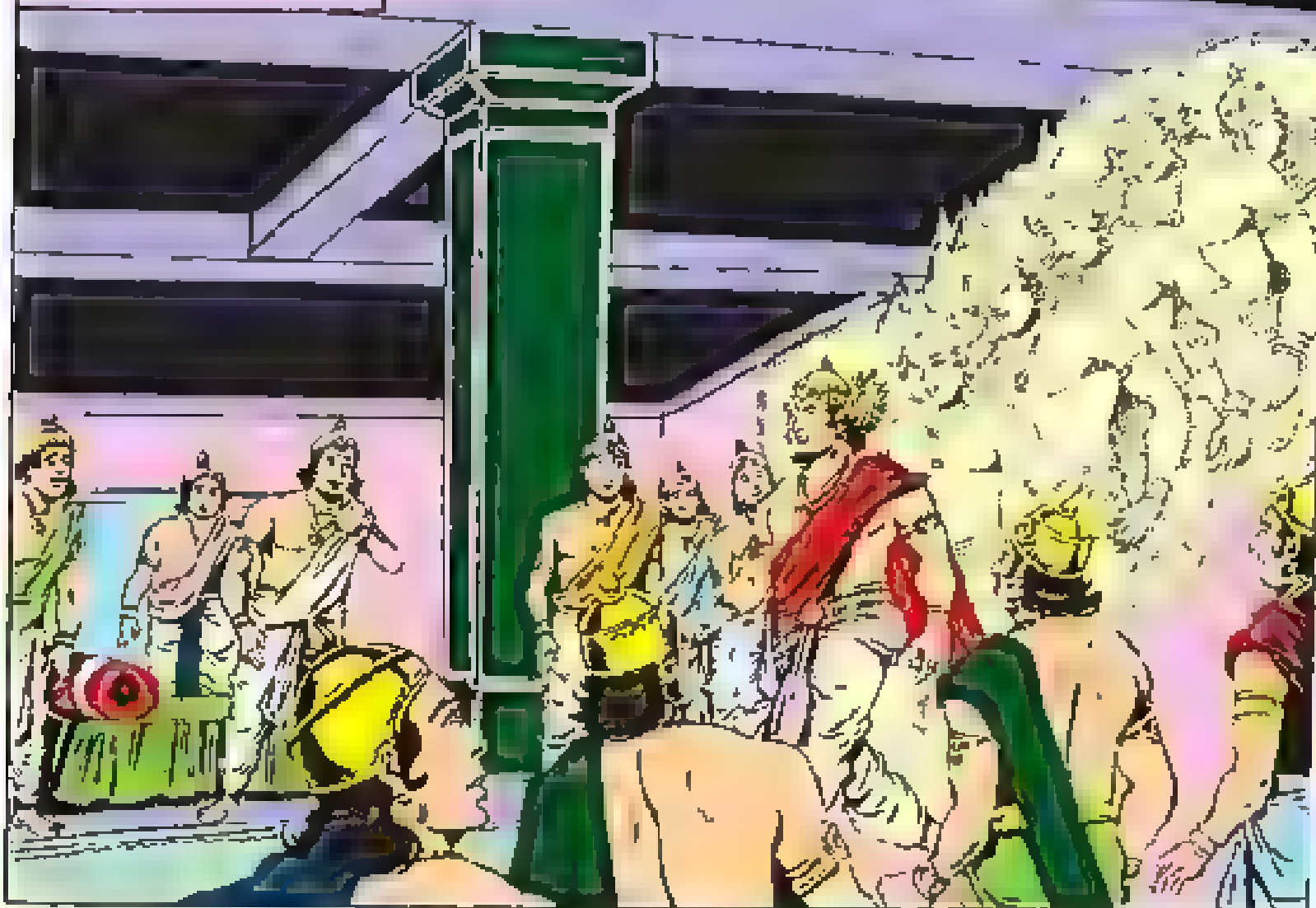
SO, WHEN YOU
OFFERED HIM A BOON,
HE CHOSE YOUR CON-
DUCT RATHER THAN
COWS OR GOLD.



FOR HE LEARNT FROM
YOU THAT IF YOUR CON-
DUCT WERE HIS, THEN
RIGHTEOUSNESS, TRUTH,
POWER AND PROSPERITY
TOO WOULD NATURAL-
LY BE HIS.

COME,
OUR LORD
AWAITS
US.

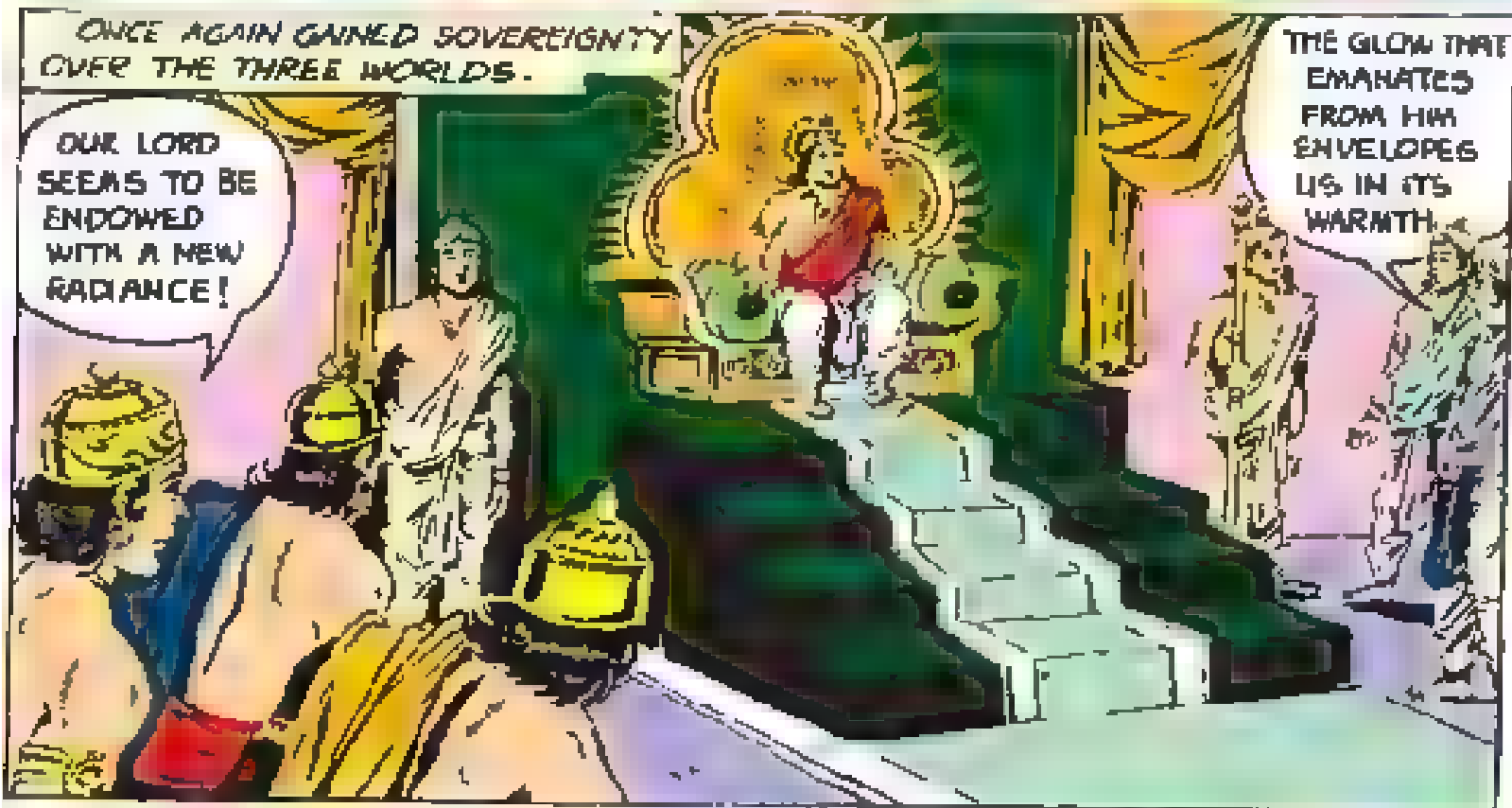
MEANWHILE INDRA ASSUMED HIS
TRUE FORM AND .



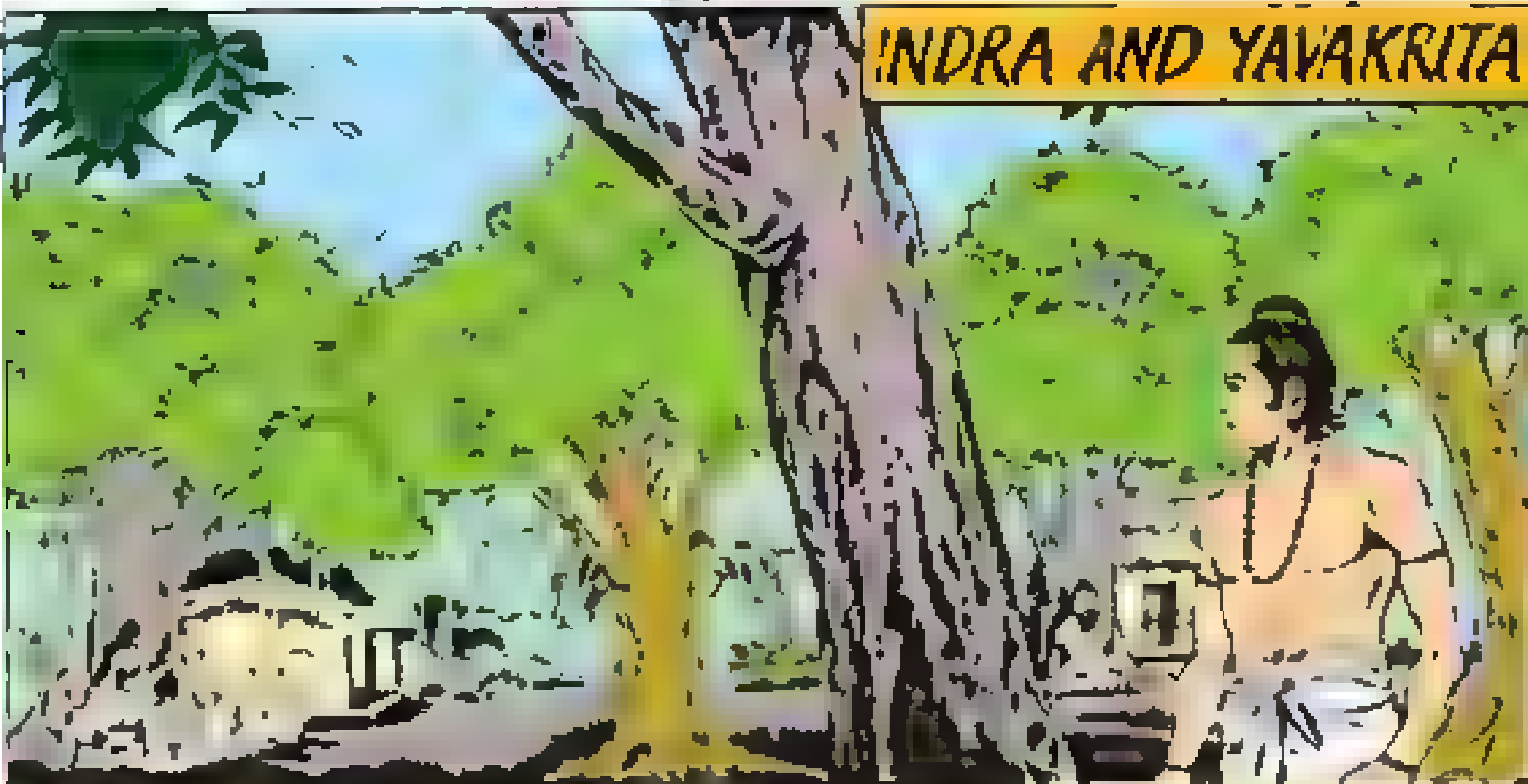
ONCE AGAIN GAINED SOVEREIGNTY
OVER THE THREE WORLDS .

OUR LORD
SEEMS TO BE
ENDOWED
WITH A NEW
RADIANCE!

THE GLOW THAT
EMANATES
FROM HIM
ENVELOPES
US IN ITS
WARMTH.



INDRA AND YAVAKRITA



IN THE DAYS OF YORE, THERE LIVED TWO SAGES WHO WERE CLOSE FRIENDS. ONE OF THEM WAS A RENOWNED VEDIC SCHOLAR AND THE OTHER, AN ASCETIC.

WHILE THE SAGES LOVED AND RESPECTED ONE ANOTHER, YAVAKRITA, THE SON OF THE ASCETIC, WAS AN UNHAPPY SOUL.



MY FATHER'S ASCETICISM HAS BROUGHT HIM NOTHING, WHILE THE VEDIC SCHOLAR IS HONOURED BY ALL.



I SHALL PRACTISE SEVERE PENANCES AND BY PENANCE ALONE SHALL I MAKE THE FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE VEDAS MINE.

THE POWER
OF MY PENANCES
SHALL BE SUCH
THAT THE CELES-
TIALS WILL BE
COMPELLED TO
GRANT MY
DESIRE.

SO GOING TO THE BANKS OF THE GANGA,
HE LIT A SACRIFICIAL FIRE.

TILL ONE OF THE
CELESTIALS APPEARS
BEFORE ME TO GRANT
MY DESIRE, SHALL
EXPOSE MY BODY
TO THIS FIRE.

AT AMARAVATI, INDRA WAS DISTURB-
ED BY YAVAKRITA'S PENANCES.

I MUST FIND OUT
WHY HE IS
TORTURING
HIMSELF SO!

SO HE APPEARED BEFORE YAVAKRITA

WHAT DO YOU
HOPE TO GAIN BY
SUCH SEVERE
AUSTERITIES?

LORD, WANT
KNOWLEDGE OF THE
VEDAS DEEPER
THAN THAT OF ANY-
ONE ELSE.

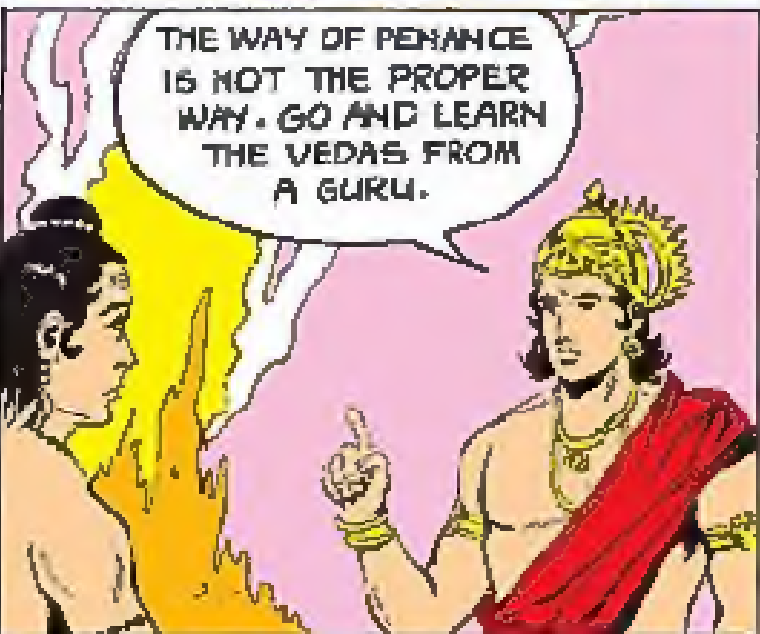
THEN WHY
DON'T YOU
SEEK A
GURU?

A GURU WOULD TAKE
SEVERAL YEARS TO IMPART
SUCH KNOWLEDGE TO ME.
I CAN ACQUIRE IT FASTER
BY THE STRENGTH OF MY
PENANCE.



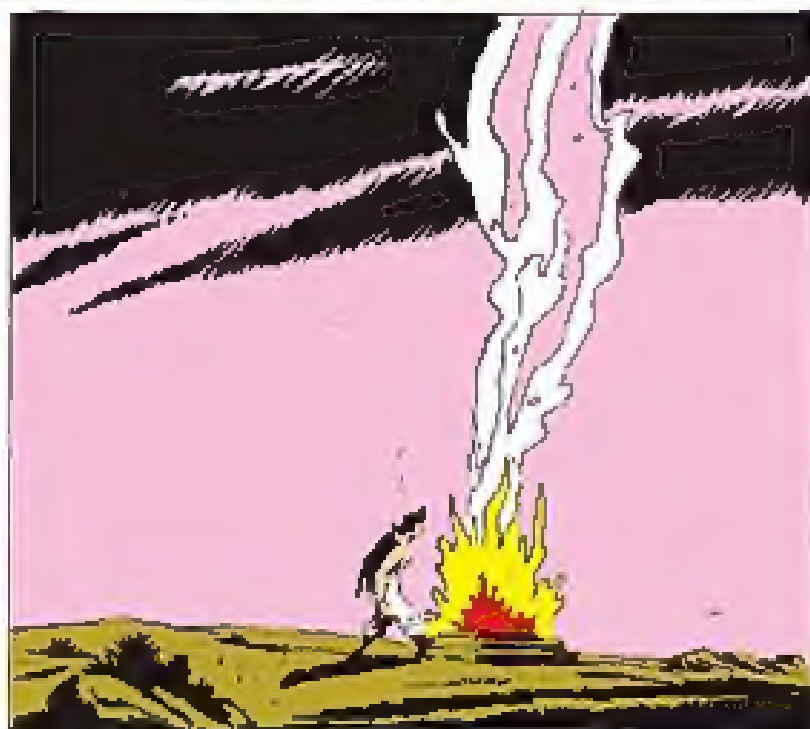
THE WAY OF PENANCE
IS NOT THE PROPER
WAY. GO AND LEARN
THE VEDAS FROM
A GURU.

AND TO YAVAKRITA'S DIGNITY, INDRA
VANISHED.



BUT HE WAS NOT GOING TO GIVE UP.

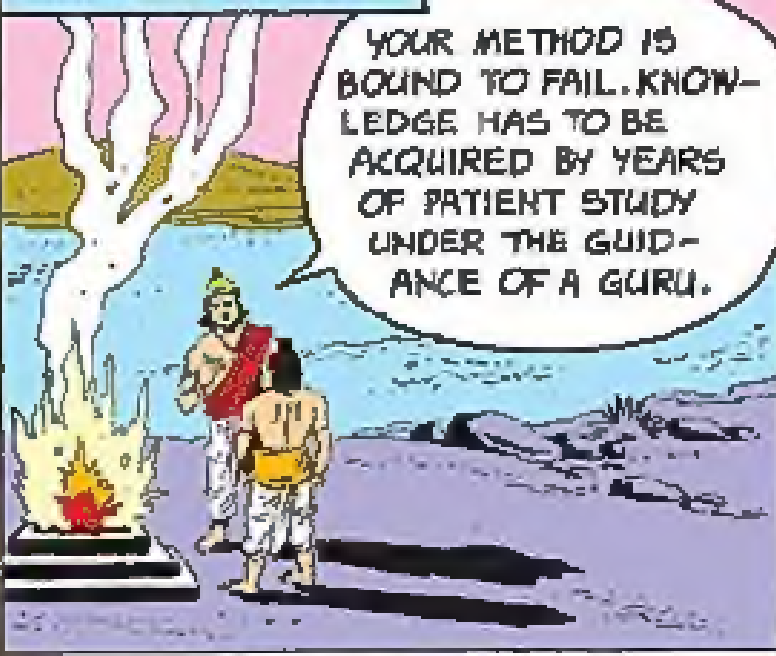
I WILL CONTINUE
WITH MY PENANCE
AND WILL MAKE
HIM APPEAR
BEFORE ME AGAIN.



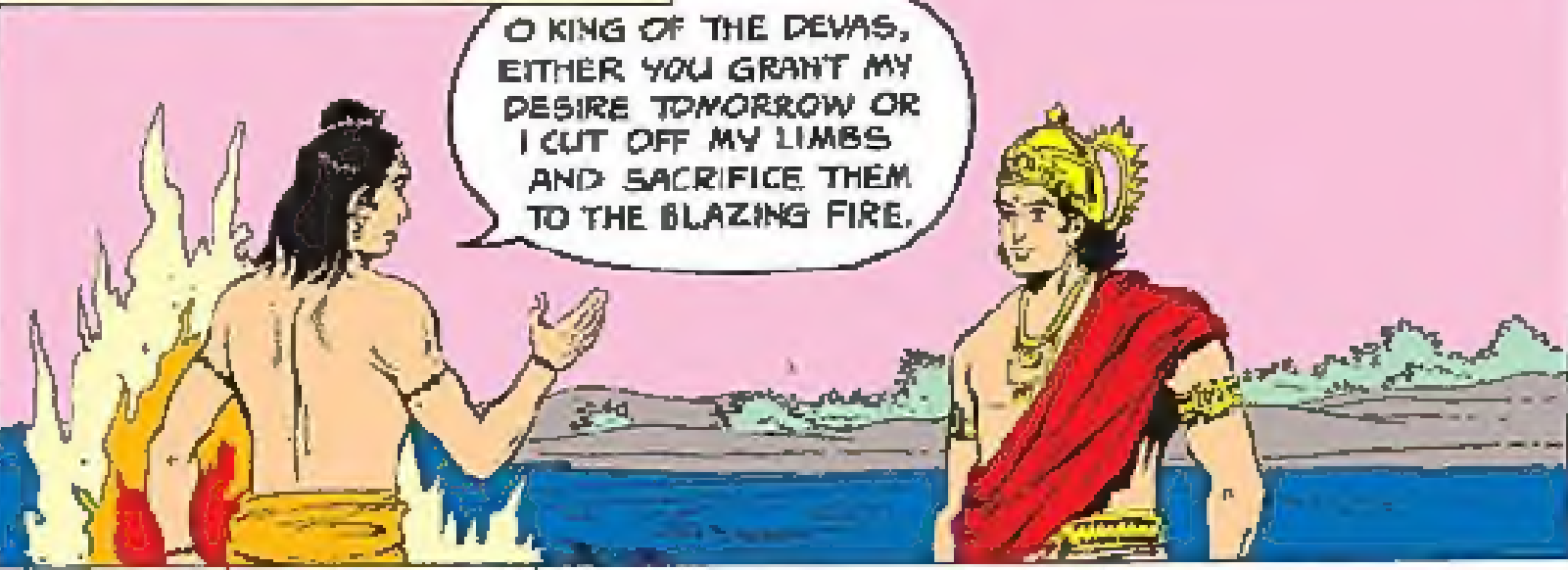
AT AMARAVATI —



SO INDRA APPEARED ONCE MORE BEFORE YAVAKRITA.



BUT YAVAKRITA WAS ADAMANT.



EARLY NEXT MORNING, AS YAVAKRITA WENT TO THE SPOT ON THE BANK OF THE GANGA WHERE HE USUALLY PERFORMED HIS ABLUTIONS...



...A STRANGE SIGHT MET HIS EYES.

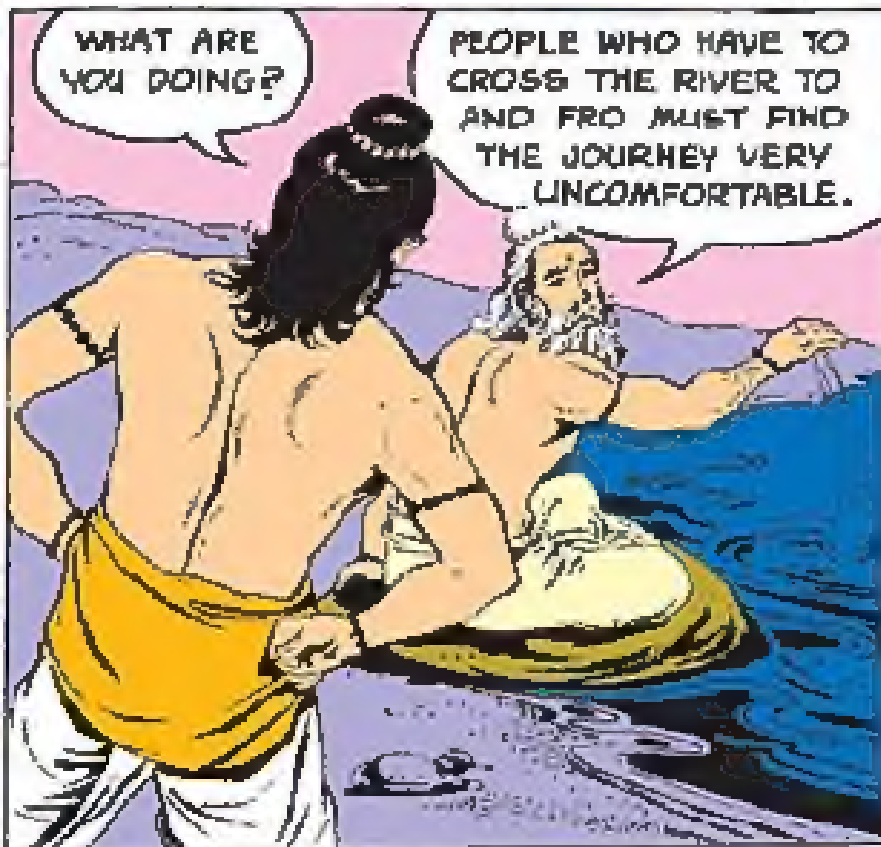
WHAT IS HE UP TO?

GOOD! HE HAS SEEN ME.

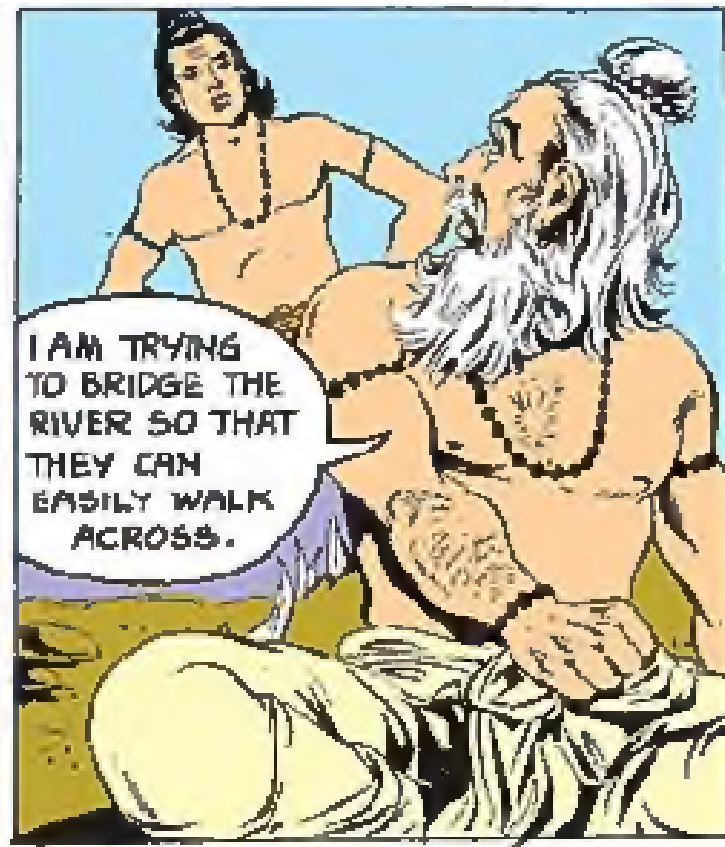


WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

PEOPLE WHO HAVE TO CROSS THE RIVER TO AND FRO MUST FIND THE JOURNEY VERY UNCOMFORTABLE.



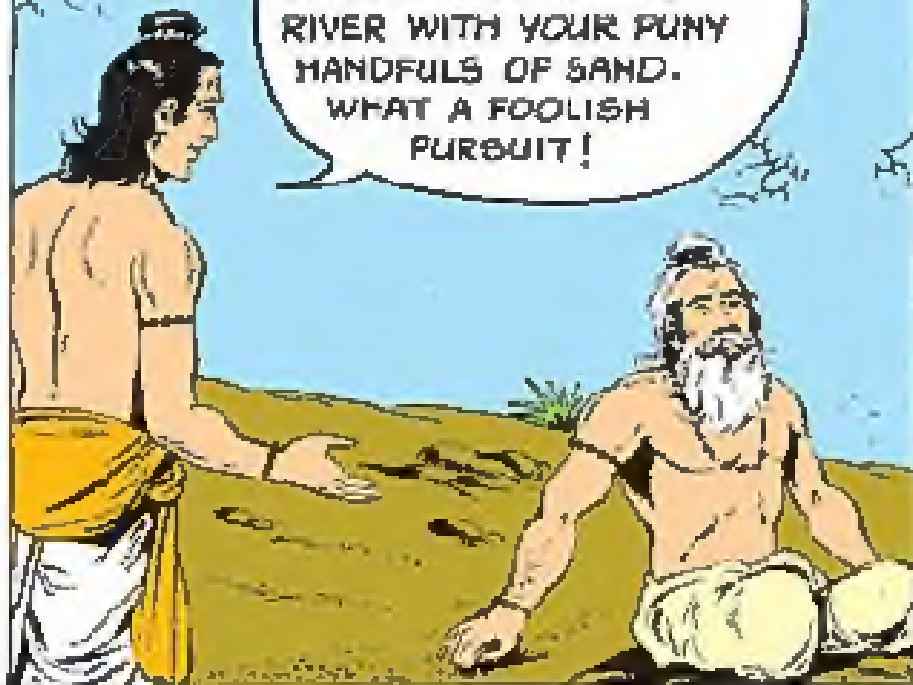
I AM TRYING TO BRIDGE THE RIVER SO THAT THEY CAN EASILY WALK ACROSS.



YAVAKRITA BURST OUT LAUGHING.



SURELY YOU MUST KNOW THAT YOU CANNOT BRIDGE THAT MIGHTY RIVER WITH YOUR PUNY HANDFULS OF SAND. WHAT A FOOLISH PURSUIT!



IT'S NO LESS FOOLISH, MY GOOD MAN, THAN YOUR ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE BY A FEW DAYS OR MONTHS OF PENANCES THAT WHICH TAKES YEARS OF PATIENT STUDY UNDER AN ABLE GURU!



SUDDENLY REALISING THAT IT WAS INDRA, YAVAKRITA FELL AT HIS FEET.

I HAVE UNDERSTOOD, MY LORD.

